of Posts has set up internet kiosks in Post Offices and Railway Mail Service Offices in a few major cities to enable the customer to browse Internet and access different services. Internet kiosks have been established at some selected offices in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Maharashtra Circle.

Computerization of Post Offices

1425. DR. ABHISHEK MANU SINGHVI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the steps being taken by Government to expedite the computerization of all the post office branches in the country;

(b) the total branches computerized as of now; and

(c) the reasons for delay in such computerization?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) In the Tenth Five Year Plan, Department of Posts proposed to computerize 7700 Departmental Post Offices. By the end of the Tenth Plan, 8263 Departmental Post Offices were computerized thereby exceeding the target. In the Eleventh Plan Department of Posts has a proposal to computerize remaining 17598 Departmental Post Offices and 64000 Extra Departmental Post Offices.

(b) Till date, 8726 Departmental Post Offices have been computerized.

(c) In view of the above, there is no delay in computerization of Post Offices.

River Ganga becoming reservoir of E. Coli

1426. DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that as per new scientific evidence Ganga river has become reservoir of virulent forms of the bacteria. Escherichia coli known to cause ailments ranging from mild intestinal disease to severe kidney complications;

(b) whether Government is also aware that Ganga is most polluted at Kanpur, Varanasi and Haridwar;

(c) whether Government is also aware that Gangajal kills 250 a year; and

(d) if so, what Government has done to clean the holy river from pollutants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS(SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Indian Council of Medical Research and National Institute of Communicable Diseases under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. Government of India, are reportedly neither aware nor have conducted any study or survey regarding the Ganga river becoming a reservoir of virulent forms of bacteria, Escherichia coli.

The monitoring of water quality of river Ganga under the Ganga Action Plan indicates that the water quality of river is not complying with the desired standards in stretches along the towns of Kanpur and Varanasi, but meeting with the norms in its stretch along the Haridwar

town. The levels of Fecal Coligorms (bacterial indicator for health concerns) are also reported to be exceeding the maximum permissible limit of 2500 MPN (Most Probable Number) per 100 milliliter at many of the monitoring stations along river Ganga except in upstream locations of Haridwar.

(c) No report is available with the Government in this regard.

(d) The Ministry, since 1985, has been implementing the Ganga Action Plan (GAP) for pollution abatement activities in the identified polluted stretches of river Ganga. Under this Plan a total sewage treatment capacity of 1765.34 million litres per day has been created so far for Ganga and its major tributaries. Despite phenomenal increase in the urban population along the banks of the river leading to increased pollution loads, the water quality of river Ganga has shown discernible improvement in terms of organic pollution at major locations, over the pre-Action Plan water quality.

Problem of e-waste

1427. SHRI B. J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that India is reeling under mounds of e-waste generated due to worn-out electronic goods like computers, cell phones and televisions etc.,

(b) whether Government is also aware that in the European Union countries it is mandatory for the manufacturing companies to recycle the e-waste, but India is turning a blind eye to the accumulation of the above harmful e-waste; and

(c) if so, the action plan of Government to address this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Based on a survey conducted under the guidance of the Central Pollution Conrol Board (CPCB) it has been estimated that about 1,46,000 tons of Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment [WEEE] is generated annually in the country.

(b) and (c) According to WEEE Directives of the European Union (EU), waste electrical or electronic equipments which include all components consumables etc. after use are to be disposed off as per the provisions of their National Law enforced. Further, EU directives focus on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipments which has come into force with effect from January, 2007. These directives provide for the reduction and elimination of hazardous substances used in electrical and electronic equipments.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests have notified the Hazardous Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 1989 as amended in 2003 which regulate the generation, collection, storage, treatment, disposal as well as export and import of hazardous wastes, which include e-waste. The processes generating hazardous wastes are listed in Schedule 1 of these rules. The residues and wastes generated from the operations in electronic industry are already considered as hazardous wastes and are included at Sl.No. 31 of Schedule 1 of these rules. Further, the import and export of e-waste is also regulated under Schedule 3 of